

REMARKS

The subject Amendment is being filed to effect minor changes.

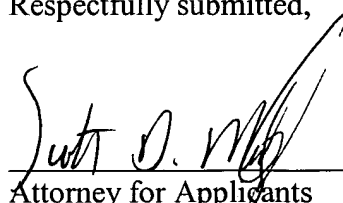
In that regard, the specification and abstract have been reviewed and amended to correct minor informalities and improve their idiomatic English form. In addition, editorial changes have been made to Claims 1, 5-7, and 13-17.

Applicants wish to thank the Examiner for the courtesy extended toward their representative during the telephone conversation on September 21, 2004. During the telephone conversation, the Examiner was granted authorization to amend Claims 1, 6, 7 and 13-17 to replace the parentheses with commas. Applicants note, however, that the Examiner's Amendment presented in the Notice of Allowability changed " $n \geq 3$ " to recite " $n > 3$ ". Applicants believe that this change was inadvertent and have amended the claims accordingly.

As the changes do not alter the scope of the claims, consideration and entry of the subject Rule 312 Amendment is deemed to be appropriate, and such action is respectfully requested.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,



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